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personality ; Erselie is quite "without form and void." John, were he possible, would be interesting as a specimen of moral amphibiousness, but a very "uncanny" servant about one's house. The apparent change in the author's plan, which breaks the unity of the plot, allows the introduction of the idea of renunciation, which is so prominent both in "Charles Auchester" and in "Counterparts." In each of the three works we have the spectacle of an absorbing and passionate love laid aside by an effort of volition. The author has a woman's enjoyment of details, and some of the descriptions of scenery, and even of houses and furniture, are very successful. The picture is painted for us in living colors. There is evidence of reserved power in this last work, in the fact that, in spite of its incongruities, it has nerve and vitality enough to insure decided interest in the reader, and to individualize its impression on the mind. Also, it is something in these days of many books, to attain to a style of one's own, and to possess peculiarities which awaken the attention without too severely shocking the principles of the reader.

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- 2.—1. *Sword and Gown.* By the Author of "Guy Livingstone." Boston : Ticknor and Fields. 1859. pp. 308.
2. *Library of Select Novels.* No. 213. *Sword and Gown.* New York : Harper and Brothers. 1859. pp. 67.

THE title of this romance appears at first glance merely epigrammatical. Viewed in the light of the discourse to which it is the text, however, it assumes the aspect of an insolent antithesis. The Sword, though by no means a Damascus blade, cuts into useless rags the Gown, which covers a poor and cowardly heart. Neither the soldier nor the priest has the ring of true metal, and the contrast between them is without dignity. The author looks at life from a very low stand-point, and attributes to his characters the most selfish and unworthy motives. They all walk in paths on which no heavenly sunshine smiles, and grovel hopelessly in the mire of their own passions. We protest against a hero and heroine such as Royston Keene and Cecil Tresilyan. They are of the coarsest clay, and all the adventitious circumstances with which they are surrounded fail to blind us to their really ignoble natures. The charms of moral beauty, the dignity of self-denial, the power of discipline, have no place in our author's thought. Yet with this heavy drawback and abatement, the story manifests, like its predecessor, a very high order of ability in style, in the arrangement of incidents, and in the delineation of character.